

**Minutes of the May 23, 2017 Meeting of the
Trustees of the Free Public Library of the City of Newark
Held in the 2nd Floor Board Room**

Call to Order: Dr. Crist called the meeting to order at 5:03 pm and read the Open Public Meeting Act Statement.

Roll Call and Attendance: Dr. Crist called the roll. Mr. Thomas Alritz, Mr. Jeremy Johnson, Dr. Anasa Maat, Ms. Trish Morris-Yamba, Mr. Charles Auffant and Ms. Rosemary Steinbaum were present. Mr. Jeffrey Trzeciak, Director of Newark Public Library, was present.

The following board members were excused:

Mr. De'Shawn Wright

Ms. Sandra King

Approval of the Public Session Minutes: On the motion of Dr. Crist, seconded by Ms. Morris-Yamba, the public minutes of the Marsh 28, 2017 meeting were unanimously approved.

Correspondence: There was no correspondence reported.

Director's Verbal Report: Mr. Trzeciak presented several monthly written reports prepared by members of the NPL Leadership Team, corresponding to their specific areas of management.

Mr. Trzeciak shared that his focus has been on community engagement. He attended events at all branches and met with many community members about information technology and facilities, two areas of major concern. He also attended events with all the Friends of the Library groups, including: a board meeting and reception for the Friends of the Newark Public Library, a reception hosted by the Friends of the James Brown African American Room, another event hosted by Friends of the James Brown African American Room and Ms. Makiba Foster, and he attended the Friends of the Hispanic Research and Information Center Gala on May 18th.

Mr. Trzeciak reported that he helped a Weequahic High School employee to establish a new Philip Roth Book Club. 40 copies of *Goodbye, Columbus*, were donated to the club by the library for that purpose. Mr. Trzeciak stated his hopes that the club will one day become a city-wide organization.

Mr. Trzeciak indicated he had begun working with the New Jersey Performing Arts Center (NJ PAC) on a series of programs for children to be held at branches, titled "Books on the Move", featuring the children's book *Firebird* by Misty Copeland. He expects there to be further collaboration between NJ PAC and the library.

Mr. Trzeciak reported initiating a partnership with the Newark City of Learning Collaborative (NCLC). The library will work with NCLC to host financial aid seminars, across four branches and at the main library, towards NCLC's objective of increasing the percentage of Newark

residents who hold degrees, certificates, and other high-quality credentials to 25% by the year 2025.

Mr. Trzeciak announced a new partnership with Catherine Wilson, CEO of United Way of Essex and West Hudson counties, to create programs supporting financial literacy, early childhood education, and health education.

Mr. Trzeciak announced efforts to “activate” the NPL courtyard space. A first, small market kick-off, took place on May 17th, and an open-mic event took place on May 20th. There is enthusiastic participation from numerous local vendors, and the Newark Downtown District supported the activation by donating 12 wrought iron tables and 48 wrought iron chairs.

Mr. Trzeciak reported he had recently traveled to Washington, D.C. with Ms. Nicole Butler, Director of Development, to meet with Senator Cory Booker, (D) New Jersey. He mentioned that Senator Booker expressed interest in collaborating with the library on a development event.

Mr. Trzeciak celebrated the good news that the library will receive a \$3,210,000.00 Capital Budget from the City of Newark.

Ms. Morris-Yamba thanked Mr. Trzeciak for the progress report, which she praised as “enlightening”.

Dr. Crist thanked Mr. Trzeciak for the email updates and the ability to see the movement at NPL.

Mr. Trzeciak also reported that his weekly email updates to staff were well-received.

Statistical Report: Dr. Crist introduced the statistical report and solicited comments. Mr. Trzeciak stated that he had questioned accuracy of the statistics, and whether they were properly focused on the most important areas of library use. Mr. Trzeciak stated that the statistics should be subject to change while the strategic plan moves forward. He predicted that changes to the statistics could mean less focus on the “tonnage” and more focus on impact. Mr. Alrutz stated that he liked to see the trends. He highlighted that in January 2017, every measure but one (statewide services) saw an increase. He stated that some of the current statistics are valuable. Dr. Crist emphasized that the number of reference and employment questions asked and answered are measured by the statistics. Mr. Alrutz stated that the library does not have website visits recorded. He stated that only in-building visits were recorded. Mr. Trzeciak remarked on the effectiveness of the website, in that he has been stopped on the street multiple times by people who have recognized him from his picture on the library website.

President’s Report: Dr. Crist stated that this board meeting was the first in a long time at which each committee had met and would be delivering a report. He was pleased to see that the functioning of the board is back into place after the extended focus on the search process for a new director.

Dr. Crist remarked that it was interesting to see that Mr. Trzeciak asked each member of the Leadership Team to report progress according to six area of activity. He stated that it fit with the

strategic planning process, and would serve to track the progress made. Dr. Crist asked the board to take the Leadership Team reports and read them.

Dr. Crist introduced a resolution to amend the by-laws of the Newark Public Library Board of Trustees to reflect the new meeting schedule and the removal of strategic planning committee from the list of standing committees. The resolution amended the by-laws to state that the regular meetings of the board would take place in the evenings on the 4th Tuesday of every other month.

Dr. Maat asked when the last meeting of the Strategic Planning Committee took place. Ms. Morris-Yamba answered that it had been at least 5 years, probably more, since the last meeting.

On the motion of Dr. Crist, seconded by Ms. Steinbaum, the Board of Trustees resolved to make the following changes to the by-laws:

1. Article V, Section 1, shall be changed to read as follows,

“The regular meetings of the board shall be held at 5:00 p.m. on the fourth Tuesday of every other month (January, March, May, September and November) except for July when the meeting shall take place on the fourth Wednesday, but if it becomes evident that a quorum cannot be secured for a scheduled meeting, the president shall instruct the director to canvass the members of the board by telephone to determine whether they will consent to the rescheduling of the meeting; and if a majority give their consent, the meeting shall be rescheduled.

2. “Strategic Planning” shall be removed from the list of standing committees in Article VI, Section 1.

Treasurer’s Report: Bill sheet #1262, with the total disbursements of \$685,562.77 for March 2017 was presented. On the motion of Mr. Alrutz, seconded by Ms. Morris-Yama, the board unanimously approved Bill Sheet #1262.

Bill sheet #1263, with the total disbursements of \$718,376.88 for April 2017 was presented. On the motion of Mr. Alrutz, seconded by Ms. Morris-Yama, the board unanimously approved Bill Sheet #1263.

Development Committee Report: The Development Committee last met on April 18th, 2017. Ms. Steinbaum gave a report on grant activity. The Career Connections grant was extended for a second year at an as-of-yet undetermined amount (after the board meeting on May 23, the amount was determined to be \$151,120.00). The grant money will be used to support patrons seeking jobs and preparing resumes.

Ms. Steinbaum presented an authorization for the Preserve New Jersey grant submitted on May 3rd, 2017. The library is seeking \$86,184 for repairs to the exterior caused by construction across the street, with a match of \$57,456.

On the motion of Ms. Steinbaum, seconded by Ms. Morris-Yamba, the resolution to authorize the Preserve New Jersey grant application was passed unanimously.

One meeting of the gala committee had already occurred at the time of the May 23, 2017 board meeting. Ms. Steinbaum asked Ms. Butler to introduce the Gala honorees to the board.

Ms. Butler stated that Michael Bright, President and CEO of the Newark YMCA, has partnered with the library this summer to visit branches with a mobile “Y on Wheels.” The purpose of is to have a fun day promoting reading in collaboration with the City of Newark. Also being honored are the Friends of Newark Public Library, the Friends of the James Brown African American Room, and the Friends of the Hispanic Research and Information Center. Conversation has begun on how to best honor each of these important honorees. Ms. Butler stated that the use of a videographer may be a good idea for honoring these groups. Ms. Butler also stated the idea of having an after-party to honor a young professional which would run from 9 p.m. – 11 p.m. She stated that Mr. Tehsuan Glover has talked with her about how to better engage younger community members.

Ms. Butler reported that Gala fundraising was off to a good start with \$20,000 from Verizon.

Ms. Butler also reported that the library planned to host an event on June 13th, 6 pm -9 pm. The theme will be “Tours & a Taste of Cuba” (name to be determined). The library will host tours from 6 pm – 7:30 p.m. with drinks, food, cigars and Cuban music at Jimenez Brothers on Liberty St., Newark. Ms. Butler is working with Audible, Inc. to arrange transportation for those who may need it. The focus of this cultivation event is our Business neighbors and the community.

Ms. Butler reported that this year’s annual Philip Roth Lecture on will take place on September 28th.

Ms. Butler stated that the Annual report is in production, and there should be a draft done after Memorial Day.

Ms. Butler gave a brief report on the capital campaign. A case statement was presented to Prudential and the library will meet with them again on May 25th to review feedback. One capital campaign cultivation event occurred at Ms. Steinbaum’s residence, and another was scheduled to occur on June 6th, 2017 at the Century Club in Midtown Manhattan, generously hosted by Mr. Mort Goldfein and Judy Loeb. The purpose of the Century Club event is to raise awareness and develop relationships with potential new donors.

Dr. Crist asked if there was any way for the library to honor Ingrid Betancourt after her being honored as the Godmother (La madrina) of the Puerto Rican Day parade. Mr. Trzeciak said he would meet with her next week and follow up.

Operations Committee Report: Mr. Alrutz introduced and reviewed the following reports for months of April 2017 and March 2017: General Operating, General Operating with Grants and Endowments, and Grants. He noted that the total grant revenue was \$1,198,544.00. He stated that the previous fiscal year is closed out and the new revenue will be clearly separated from funds carried forward from last year.

Mr. Alrutz stated that the “City of Newark Revenue” of \$10,488,169.00 is the full amount that he expects the city to generate. He anticipated a 2% increase which is what was received for 2016. He explained that all the fringe benefits were added into the budget, including the anticipated increase of 1.8% (encumbered under line “capital expense”) in order to form a clearer picture of what the total cost would be.

Mr. Crist inquired why the numbers for e-rate were not shown on the budget reports. Mr. Alrutz stated that it was simpler for Verizon to bill the government directly.

Mr. Alrutz indicated an increase in expenditures for “Salary and Wages” between March 2017 and April 2017. He then noted that the annual budget for line “Books and Materials” had increased between 2016 and 2017. He cited the leadership of a new budget director, library director and other changes as reasons for this increase.

Mr. Crist stated that the city was current with sending checks to the library on time.

Mr. Auffant asked about the lines titled “Insurances” and “Rental & Leasing”, both of which were over budget. Mr. Alrutz explained that these lines covered expenses for the insurance on company cars, the special collections, liability, in addition to the yearly rental of space at the Newark Housing Authority which houses parts of the special collections. Mr. Auffant then asked about the projected premiums. He sought to verify whether or not the board was projecting that the premiums will also go over the budget. Mr. Alrutz clarified that the library has encumbered more than budgeted. He advised that the library will have to adjust as the year goes on.

Mr. Alrutz introduced three reports from the Community Foundation of New Jersey (CFNJ) for January, February and March, 2017. He stated that the strategy is to put half of the money into a stable value pool (interest rate of 0.63%) and half in the flagship portfolio (interest rate of 7-9%). The aim is to maximize total return value of encumbered funds. He also reported that the library currently holds \$639,550.13 in its Ameriprise account. He indicated that these funds will be moved from the Ameriprise CDs into the CFNJ account as the CDs mature.

Ms. Morris-Yamba stated that she would like to have someone do homework on the insurance behind special collections. Dr. Crist and Mr. Trzeciak agreed that policies needed to be reviewed regarding special collections. Mr. Trzeciak expressed concern that the insurance coverage for special collections was insufficient. He believed the library held general coverage but not an addendum or coverage sufficiently insuring the total value of the library’s special collections.

On motion of Mr. Alrutz, seconded by Mr. Crist, it was unanimously resolved that the Newark Public Library’s Board of Trustees authorizes the firm of BCA Watson Rice LLP to complete the Comprehensive Annual Financial report of the Free Public Library of the City of Newark for the period ended December 31, 2016 at a cost of \$23,500.

Mr. Alrutz reported that the library received a capital appropriation of \$3.2 million from the City of Newark. He reminded that the library needed a more detailed plan about how the money will be spent and the priorities for short- and long-term repairs. He indicated that Mr. George Williams’ report provided guidance for what those repairs might be.

Mr. Williams reported that roof repairs have been identified and need priority. Other projects include the service building wall and HVAC system. He stated that there would be more to report prior to the next board meeting. He indicated that he will have meetings with the city engineer to talk about the capital campaign. An energy audit performed by AKF engineers was also planned.

Mr. Alrutz stated that the library can bill the City directly for capital expenses.

Human Resources Committee Report: The human resources committee deferred to the executive session.

Unfinished Business: There was no unfinished business.

New Business: The Board heard a resolution in appreciation of Mr. Gerald Fitzhugh. Dr. Crist remarked on Mr. Fitzhugh's impressive career and impact on the Library after 50 years service. On the motion of Dr. Crist, seconded by Mr. Auffant, the board unanimously resolved to commend Mr. Gerald Fitzhugh, Assistant Director for Facilities, Human Resources, and Security, for his distinguished career of fifty years with the Newark Public Library. He has served the Library and the people of Newark with dedication and distinction, and the Board extends him all good wishes as he begins his retirement on June 1st, 2017.

Dr. Crist asked Mr. Trzeciak to note how Mr. Fitzhugh's duties will be parceled out. Mr. Trzeciak responded that Ms. Leslie Colson will be taking over Human Resources, and Mr. Williams will be taking over facilities and security.

Public Comment Period: Dr. Crist asked if there were any public comments.

Mr. Jorge Rodriguez, stood and commended Mr. Trzeciak's weekly reports. He praised them as having been very detailed and expressed appreciation for the increased communications. He believes it will foster unity at NPL.

Mr. George Hawley stood and commented on the Eagles Baseball Archives. He stated that the archives had never been deemed valuable by the library, yet a recently published book on baseball history cited the archive multiple times. The archives were the "second most used" source in the book. He thought a reconsideration of their value may be in order. Mr. Jeremy Johnson commented that a recently written play named Down Neck contained some of Newark's baseball history. Dr. Crist also commented that the late poet and playwright Amiri Baraka had written an essay about going to see the Eagles play down neck. Mr. Trzeciak commented that there does not seem to be a good way to express all that is special and unique about the "Special Collections."

Ms. Colson gave an update on health benefits. She stated that the library was joining the state employee health benefits medical plan, and that the library would stay with the City of Newark Dental plan. An information session for staff was to take place on May 31st 2017 and the plan goes into effect August 1st, 2017.

Executive Session: On the motion of Dr. Crist, seconded by Mr. Alrutz, the board unanimously resolved to move into Executive Session at 6:40 p.m.

Reconvening into Public Session: At 7:00 p.m., a motion to return to public session was made by Dr. Crist and seconded by Mr. Alrutz, to vote on the personnel resolutions.

(Personnel Resolutions are attached.)

Adjournment: As there was no further business, Dr. Crist announced that the next board meeting would be on July 26, 2017 at 5pm. The meeting adjourned at 7:10 p.m.

Personnel Resolutions – May 23, 2017

In accordance with the By-Laws, Article V, Section 1, the director recommends ratification of the following personnel actions:

1. On the motion of Ms. Steinbaum, seconded by Ms. Morris-Yamba, and voted unanimously that the resignation received by Ms. Matilda Odunsi be accepted and approved, effective as of May 6, 2017.
2. On the motion of Ms. Steinbaum, seconded by Ms. Morris-Yamba, and voted unanimously that the provisional appointment of Ms. Magaly Santiago as Fundraiser (\$56,000yr.), pending the New Jersey Civil Service Commission examination and certification, be accepted and approved, effective May 6, 2017.
3. On the motion of Ms. Steinbaum, seconded by Ms. Morris-Yamba, and voted unanimously that the following appointments (replacement) in the non-competitive division be approved as of the dates indicated:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Salary</u>	<u>Effective Dates</u>
a. Nonique Harris	Monitor	\$8.44hr.	April 3, 2017
b. Robert Latz	Systems Analyst	\$64,750yr.	April 5, 2017

4. On the motion of Ms. Steinbaum, seconded by Ms. Morris-Yamba, and voted unanimously that the following transfer appointments in the non-competitive division be approved:

<u>Name</u>	<u>From</u>	<u>To</u>	<u>Effective</u>
a. Qiana Collins	Monitor \$8.72	Library Assistant 27,933yr.	April 10, 2017
b. Tanika People	Library Asst. \$27,935yr.	Clerk 1 \$30,728yr.	April 8, 2017

5. On the motion of Ms. Steinbaum, seconded by Ms. Morris-Yamba, and voted unanimously that the promotional appointments of the following, certified by the Civil Service Commission, be approved effective April 10, 2017:

<u>Name</u>	<u>From</u>	<u>To</u>
a. Davis, Dwayne	Sr. Bldg. Maint. Wkr. temp. \$32,060yr.	Sr. Bldg. Maint. Wkr. \$33,022yr.
b. Smith, Derrick	Bldg. Maint. Wkr. \$34,097yr.	Sr. Bldg. Maint. Wkr. \$35,120yr.

6. On the motion of Ms. Steinbaum, seconded by Ms. Morris-Yamba, and voted unanimously that the following base salary increases be approved as of the dates indicated:

<u>Name</u>	<u>From</u>	<u>To</u>	<u>Effective</u>
a. Colson, Leslie	\$62,263yr.	\$65,376yr.	4/10/17
b. Rodriguez, Cianella	\$60,133yr.	\$63,140yr.	4/17/17
c. Myricks, Isidra	\$41,479yr.	\$41,980yr.	4/17/17
d. Rodriguez, Aurelia	\$39,179yr.	\$41,980yr.	4/17/17

7. On the motion of Ms. Steinbaum, seconded by Ms. Morris-Yamba, and voted unanimously that, WHEREAS, Gerald Fitzhugh has reached 50 years of service as an employee of the Library, has reached the age of 72 and is now eligible for retirement as a member of the Public Employees' Retirement System of the New Jersey, now THEREFORE, the Board of Library Trustees approves Mr. Fitzhugh's retirement from the Library effective June 1, 2017.
8. On the motion of Ms. Steinbaum, seconded by Ms. Morris-Yamba, and voted unanimously that the employment contract of Jeffrey Trzeciak as Director of the Library be approved.

FOOTNOTES

Resignation

Matilda Odunsi

Retirement

Gerald Fitzhugh

Termination

Death